IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A sheet processing apparatus comprising:

a compiling tray for forming a sheet bundle by sequentially collecting sheets supplied thereto;

a sheet alignment portion for aligning sheets supplied to said compiling tray;

a pressing member, provided in such a way as to be able to advance and retract in a direction of thickness of the sheets collected in said compiling tray, for holding sheets already collected in said compiling tray and aligned in said sheet alignment portion when a new sheet is supplied to said compiling tray; and

a controller that controls said pressing member according to a thickness of sheets collected on said compiling tray,

wherein said pressing member is provided in such a way as to advance and retract between an advancing position, at which said pressing member presses sheets on said compiling tray, and a retreating position at which said pressing member does not hinder the sheets on said compiling tray from being discharged therefrom, and

wherein advancing and retracting operations of said pressing member vary according to whether or not folding is performed on sheets newly supplied to said compiling tray, and according to what supply portion supplies sheets newly to said compiling tray, or according to a thickness of sheets newly supplied to said compiling tray.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a guide member, provided in such a way as to be able to be interlocked with said pressing member, for guiding a sheet newly supplied to said compiling tray.

Claim 4 (Cancelled).

Claim 5 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said pressing member presses sheets already collected on said compiling tray before a leading end of a sheet newly supplied to said compiling tray touches the sheets already collected thereon, and wherein said pressing member goes away from the collected sheets before a rear end of the newly supplied sheet is discharged onto said compiling tray.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): A sheet processing apparatus comprising:

a compiling tray for receiving and stacking conveyed sheets;

a longitudinal reference wall for performing alignment of sheets stacked on said compiling tray by aligning rear ends of the sheets; and

a controller that controls a reference position in a longitudinal alignment in a direction of thickness of sheets stacked on said compiling tray, for providing a predetermined conveyance

force to sheets sequentially supplied to said compiling tray, and for pushing said sheets against said longitudinal reference wall.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein a longitudinal alignment portion conveys the sheet to said longitudinal reference wall by using a member that turns by simultaneously touching a surface of said sheet.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising: [[a]] ~~said~~ controller ~~that~~ to control[[s]] the reference position in said longitudinal alignment according to the number of sheets stacked on said compiling tray.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 7,

wherein said longitudinal alignment portion conveys sheets to said longitudinal reference wall when placed at a sheet alignment position, and

wherein said longitudinal alignment portion once moves from said sheet alignment position to a sheet pressing position in synchronization with predetermined sheet conveying timing, and then returns to said sheet alignment position.

Claim 10 (Withdrawn): A sheet-bundle alignment method for forming a sheet bundle by aligning rear ends of sheets received and stacked on said compiling tray, the method comprising:

pushing a rotational member against a surface of a sheet and conveying sheets to a reference wall on which rear ends of sheets are aligned;

counting sheets supplied to said compiling tray; and

changing a reference position of said rotational member in a direction of thickness of a sheet when the number of sheets to be counted exceeds a predetermined value.

Claim 11 (Withdrawn): The sheet-bundle alignment method according to claim 10, wherein: the reference position to be changed is changed in a direction of thickness of the sheet in such a way as to be away from the sheet; and

after the reference position is changed, the reference position is further changed with respect to the direction of thickness of the sheet with predetermined timing by repeatedly employing an approaching direction and a separating direction.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): A sheet processing apparatus comprising:

a compiling tray for receiving and stacking supplied sheets;

a longitudinal reference wall for performing alignment of sheets stacked on said compiling tray by aligning rear ends of said sheets;

a first moving-aside unit for moving said sheets aside toward said longitudinal reference wall at a rear end side of said sheets supplied to said compiling tray; and

a second moving-aside unit for moving said sheets aside toward said longitudinal reference wall at a leading end side of each of said sheets, wherein said second moving-aside unit is provided closer to said leading end side than said first moving-aside unit;

a conveyance force of said second moving-aside unit is used for moving said sheets aside toward said longitudinal reference wall, and set therein in such a way as to be variable; and

said second moving-aside unit is set in a manner that varies according to whether or not folding is performed on sheets stacked on said compiling tray.

Claim 13 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said second moving-aside unit is enabled to move in a direction of thickness of a sheet bundle accommodated in said compiling tray.

Claim 14 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said second moving-aside unit changes a position thereof in a direction of thickness of a sheet bundle according to the sheet bundle stacked on said compiling tray.

Claim 15 (Cancelled):

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): A sheet bundle alignment method for forming a sheet bundle by aligning rear ends of conveyed sheets received and stacked by said compiling tray, the method comprising:

pushing a rotary member against a surface of a sheet in synchronization with supply of the sheet and conveying sheets to a reference wall for aligning the rear end of a sheet;

grasping a situation of sheets supplied to said compiling tray; and

changing a conveyance force of said rotary member according to the situation of said sheets.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn): The sheet bundle alignment method according to claim 16, wherein the conveyance force is changed by changing a distance of said rotary member from a sheet stacking surface of said compiling tray.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): A sheet processing apparatus comprising:

a compiling tray for receiving and stacking supplied sheets;

a counting unit for counting sheets supplied to said compiling tray; and

an execution unit for performing a predetermined operation on said sheets according to a count obtained by said counting unit, wherein

in a case that said sheets supplied to said compiling tray have undergone predetermined post-processing, said counting unit counts said sheets by converting one sheet of said sheets into n-sheets (n>1).

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 18, wherein said post-processing is folding to be performed on said sheets.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 18, wherein: said execution unit is a member for guiding said sheets toward a longitudinal reference wall; and said execution unit performs an operation of moving in a direction of thickness of said sheets according to a count obtained by said counting unit.

Claim 21 (Withdrawn): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 18, wherein a value of the "n" (n>1), which is converted by said counting unit, varies according to a kind of said post-processing, a kind of said sheet, a size of said sheet, and a stacking condition of said sheets to which the post-processing is performed.

Claim 22 (Withdrawn): A sheet bundle aligning method for forming a sheet bundle by aligning conveying direction end portions of sheets supplied to said compiling tray, on which the conveyed sheets are stacked, the method comprising:

counting sheets supplied to said compiling tray;

correcting the number of said counted sheets;

pushing a rotary member against a surface of a sheet in synchronization with said sheet, and conveying said sheet to said reference wall for aligning the conveying direction end portions; and

changing a conveyance force of said rotary member according to the corrected number of sheets.

Claim 23 (Withdrawn): The sheet bundle alignment method according to claim 22, wherein the conveyance force is changed by changing a distance of said rotary member from a sheet stacking surface of said compiling tray.